

Municipality of Huron Shores

Corporate Strategic Plan

2025 - 2029

prepared for:



prepared by:



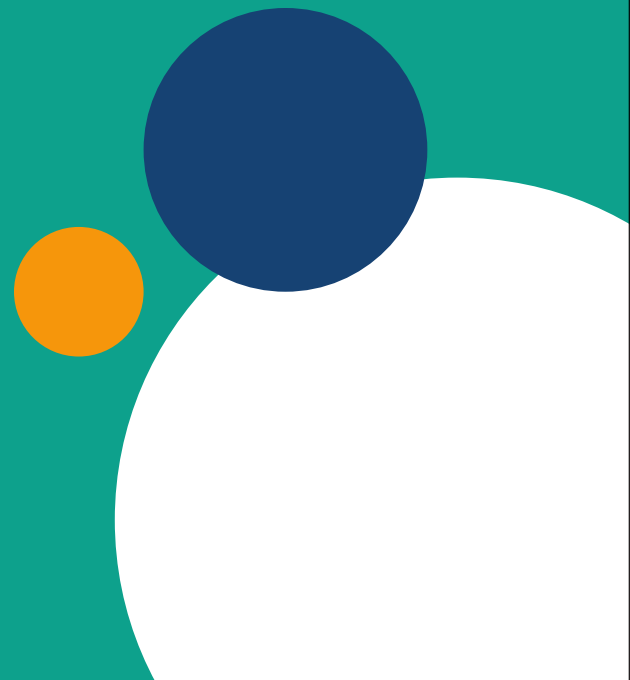




Land Acknowledgement

The Municipality of Huron Shores is located in the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the traditional land of the Anishnaabeg people dating back countless generations. The Municipality makes this statement as a way to demonstrate respect for their contributions and recognize the role of treaty-making in what is now Ontario. Hundreds of years after the first treaties were signed, they are still relevant today.

The Strategic Plan for Huron Shores is Council's leadership document, setting out its vision and identifying a series of objectives and actions to guide the planning activities of Council and Management.





Strategic Planning Process

A project backgrounder was prepared in April 2024 to kick off the strategic planning process, and circulated to the Mayor, members of Council and Management staff. The backgrounder document provided the relevant planning context to guide the strategic planning process.

Members of Council and Management staff participated in a facilitated strategic planning workshop in May 2024. Workshop outcomes, in conjunction with background research, have informed the development of the Strategic Plan.

This Plan is Council's leadership document, setting out the corporate vision and mission for the Municipality, and identifying a series of objectives and actions to guide the planning activities of Council and Management.

Plan Framework



Vision Statement

A Vision Statement defines the optimal desired future state of what an organization wants to achieve over time, providing guidance and inspiration as to what an organization is focused on achieving in a set period of time.



Mission Statement

A Mission Statement defines the fundamentals of what the organization will do and deliver. Every strategic and operational decision needs to align with the organization's Mission.



Goals

Strategic Goals are broad, long-term outcomes outlining what the organization wants to achieve within a time frame and with available resources.



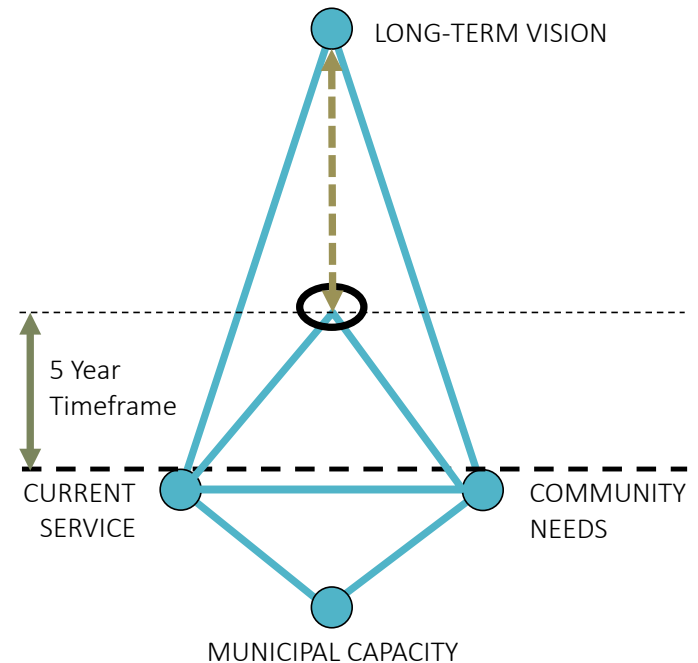
Objectives

Strategic Objectives break down goals into explicit directions that can be quantified or measured in some other way.



Actions

Strategic Actions are the tools used by the organization in pursuing an objective associated with a goal.



Huron Shores Today

The Municipality of Huron Shores, established by amalgamation on January 1, 1999, spans 457 km² in the Algoma District. Strategically located along Highway 17, it serves as a gateway municipality to the Mississagi River Valley and the North Channel of Lake Huron, connecting the region's natural and cultural landscapes.

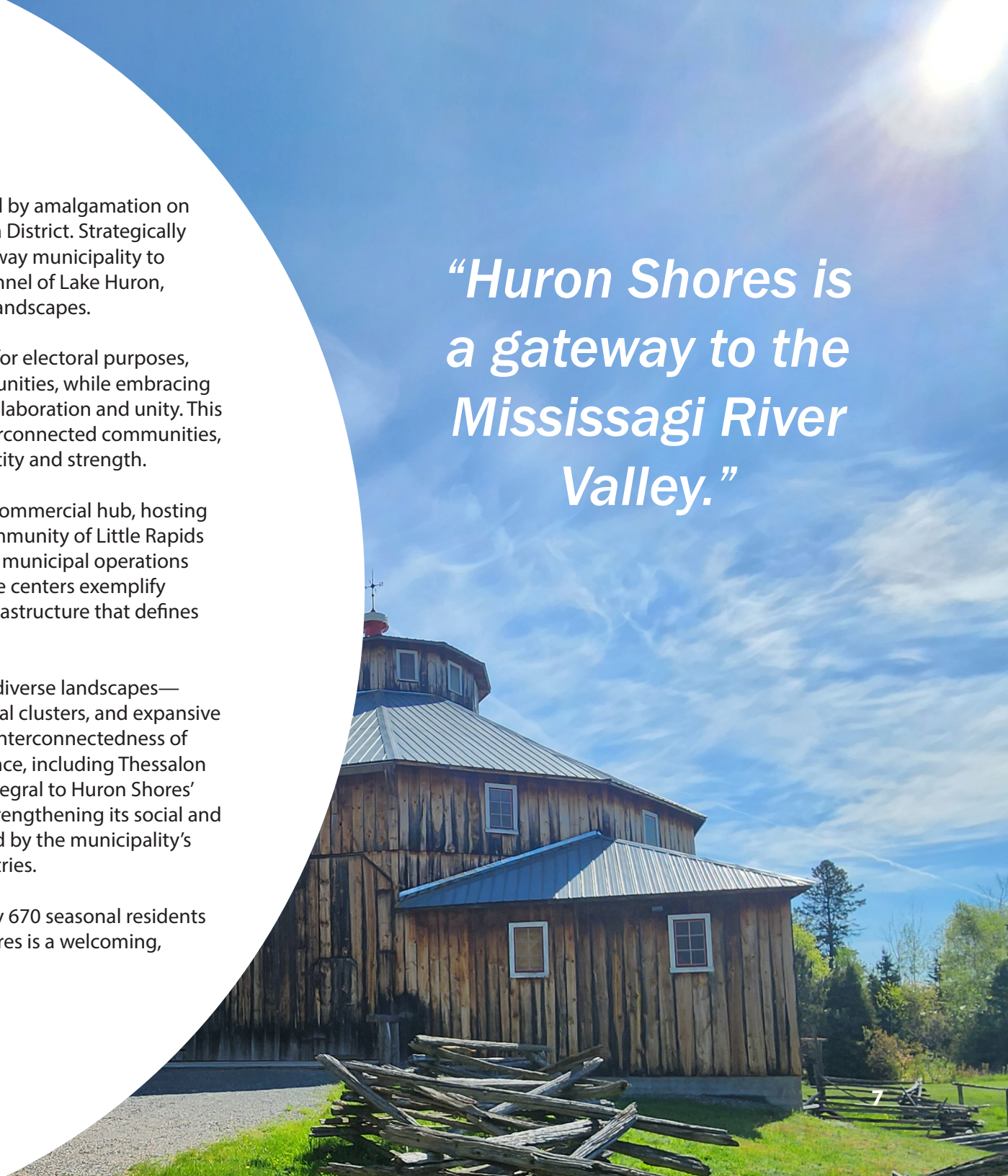
Huron Shores operates under a ward system for electoral purposes, ensuring representation for its diverse communities, while embracing a "One Municipality" approach that fosters collaboration and unity. This reflects the collective contributions of its interconnected communities, past and present, which have shaped its identity and strength.

Iron Bridge serves as the administrative and commercial hub, hosting municipal offices and public services. The community of Little Rapids complements this as a secondary location for municipal operations and additional public services. Together, these centers exemplify the blend of community spirit and shared infrastructure that defines Huron Shores.

The municipality's character is defined by its diverse landscapes—spanning lakefront properties, small residential clusters, and expansive rural and agricultural areas—that reflect the interconnectedness of its communities. A strong First Nations presence, including Thessalon First Nation and Mississaugi First Nation, is integral to Huron Shores' identity, enriching its cultural heritage and strengthening its social and economic fabric. This legacy is complemented by the municipality's roots in farming, logging, and resource industries.

With a population of 1,864 and approximately 670 seasonal residents (2021), expected to remain stable, Huron Shores is a welcoming, vibrant rural community.

***"Huron Shores is
a gateway to the
Mississagi River
Valley."***



Strengths

Internal attributes and resources that support a successful outcome.

- Advantageous location for agriculture
- World-class natural setting for outdoor recreation
- Strong environmental stewardship
- Welcoming, proud community
- Large land area with a mix of communities
- Affordable to live, work and play
- Considerable knowledge held by staff

Weaknesses

Internal attributes and resources that work against a successful outcome.

- Vast municipal scale and ongoing infrastructure needs
- Lack of services (e.g., commerce, health care)
- Lack of sewer and water servicing
- Difficulty in attracting younger households
- Perception of investment inequality among wards
- Limited staffing capacity
- Current level of service does not reflect a 'one municipality' approach

Opportunities

External factors the organization can capitalize on or use to its advantage.

- Build on and promote seasonal tourism
- Enhance access to the water - Lake Huron, inland lakes
- Improve and promote the trail network
- Establish relationships with First Nation communities and Amish communities
- Climate change and agricultural diversification

Threats

External factors that could pose a risk to the organization's success.

- Aging population
- Labour shortages
- Health care
- Climate change
- Lack of access to funding from upper levels of government
- High residential proportion of tax base
- Future fiscal/taxation challenges
- Changing forestry industry
- Major employers moving away



VISION

Huron Shores is a vibrant and welcoming community and a destination for tourists, endowed with rich heritage and natural beauty. We are unique communities but one municipality, stronger and more resourceful as a result.

MISSION

To meet the needs of residents and businesses by delivering high-quality equitable and inclusive services efficiently to ensure a healthy, fiscally sustainable, and environmentally responsible future.

Strategic Priorities for 2025-2029

The Strategic Plan is built on four priorities identified through the strategic planning process. These priorities will guide Council and Staff in future planning and decision-making for projects, initiatives, and program implementation over the next five years.

For each of the four priorities identified, a series of objectives were developed.

For each objective, action items have been established that will contribute to successfully fulfilling the goals.

The priorities, objectives and actions are presented in no particular order.

1 Community
Infrastructure & Assets

2 Economic Development
& Tourism

3 Healthy & Vibrant
Community

4 Organizational
Excellence

Community Infrastructure & Assets

Strategic Priority

1

Goal: Maintain community infrastructure and assets that support service excellence and community needs in a financially sustainable manner.

Objective 1: Long-Term Asset Management Planning for Infrastructure, Facilities, and Equipment

Actions:

- 1.1. Develop multi-year plans for infrastructure, facilities and equipment repair, replacement and maintenance.
- 1.2. Develop and implement a strategy to consolidate duplicated municipal services (i.e. landfill).
- 1.3. Continue to investigate a variety of funding models for infrastructure investment, including but not limited to securing grants, corporate sponsorships, regional partnerships and other alternative revenue sources to reduce reliance on the tax base.

Objective 2: Tie Investment in Facilities and Infrastructure to the Community's Changing Needs

Actions:

- 1.4. Re-evaluate municipal facilities to ensure they meet changing population trends.

Economic Development & Tourism

Strategic Priority

2

Goal: Positive economic growth to improve community overall well-being and vitality.

Objective 1: Diversify the Tax Base for Economic Growth

Actions:

- 2.1. Work with Regional Tourism Organization (RTO) 13b, East Algoma District, and local partners to develop an updated Economic Development Strategy, targeting all opportunities for economic growth.
- 2.2. Engage the local agricultural community, as well as regional and provincial agricultural organizations, to promote on-farm diversification and value-added agricultural opportunities, and identify alternative revenue streams.
- 2.3. Continue to explore the development of viable lands across the municipality that contribute to the goals of economic development.

Objective 2: Increased Focus on Tourism and Visitation

Actions:

- 2.4. Maximize seasonal and outdoor tourism and develop a coordinated tourism marketing plan to help attract more visitors.
- 2.5. Develop a comprehensive Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to support commercial and tourism businesses.

Healthy & Vibrant Community

Goal: Recognize the importance of the community's health and quality of life.

Strategic Priority

3

Objective 1: Strengthen Community Unity by Taking a "One Municipality" Approach to Planning

Actions:

- 3.1. Celebrate municipal successes by proactively informing the community and providing opportunities for positive and active citizen engagement to reinforce connection and commitment.
- 3.2. Broaden engagement efforts with the municipality's youth demographic, and seasonal residents, to ensure that their opinions, ideas, and concerns are heard and considered in municipal decision-making.

Objective 2: Support and Promote an Active and Safe Community

Actions:

- 3.3. Collaborate with other municipalities and neighbouring communities (e.g., Thessalon First Nations, Blind River, Thessalon, etc.) for mutual support and benefit. The aim is to cross-promote program opportunities and complement the existing offer in neighbouring communities, not duplicate.
- 3.4. With a focus on health and wellness, improve access to recreation and leisure programming along the North Shore and beyond through transportation-related and other partnerships.

Service Excellence

Goal: Enhance service delivery through corporate efficiencies and strong fiscal management.

Strategic Priority

4

Objective 1: Advocate and Partner to Deliver Community Priorities

Actions:

- 4.1. Develop a government relations and advocacy strategy to engage other levels of government to actualize community priorities (e.g., agriculture, recreation, environment, healthcare, etc.).
- 4.2. Develop a strong relationship with neighbouring and regional municipalities through ongoing engagement with these, and other, partners (e.g., annual Mayor's meetings, etc.).
- 4.3. Identify and pursue formal shared infrastructure and services with neighbouring municipalities such as physician recruitment support, increased healthcare infrastructure, procurement coordination, etc.

Objective 2: Support a Healthy Workplace Environment and Effective Workforce

Actions:

- 4.4. Promote a positive workplace culture and invest in professional development opportunities to attract and retain high quality staff.
- 4.5. Ensure a smooth transition of retiring employees by securing knowledge transfer and awareness to retain quality services and ensure the required staff capacity is in place to provide service excellence.
- 4.6. Invest in improving office infrastructure, IT architecture solutions, and software packages to keep pace with changing technologies and improve work flow efficiencies.



Measuring Success

A review of the Strategic Plan is recommended to be undertaken on an annual basis to assess the progress made. This review should be based on the actions that have been implemented to date, barriers impeding progress, recommendations on revisions or new inputs, and any new issues and opportunities that may impact the Strategic Plan. This review should also consider changes in the operating and economic environment and adjustments to the tasks and timing of implementation may be appropriate.

Every three to five years, the Municipality should engage in a full review exercise of the Strategic Plan to confirm that the actions are appropriately timed and the scope is still appropriate in successfully moving the Municipality forward to the realization of its Vision and Mission.

